
Statement for the Record

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Management**

Preparing for All Hazards: Are we ready?

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Introduction

Chairman Oberstar, Subcommittee Chairwoman Norton, Ranking Members Mica and Graves, and Members of the Committee, thank you for inviting me to appear before you today.

I look forward to working with this Subcommittee and Congress to continue the improvements we are implementing to enhance the capabilities of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to ensure that our Nation is prepared for all hazards, especially those that are catastrophic in nature. We are working to reorganize and build a New FEMA with greater capabilities. Our commitment is to improve our Nation's all hazards preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation systems and capabilities. We are taking the first steps in what will be a multi-year effort to significantly increase FEMA's core capabilities and capacity to better serve and protect our Nation and its citizens.

Background

The 2005 Hurricane disasters will long be remembered for the damage and the disruption they caused for communities and many families. These disasters forced America to rethink vulnerability and risk assumptions. In addition to these very significant impacts, the hurricanes served as catalysts for major changes in Federal policy, approaches, and the organization of responsible Federal entities, notably within DHS and in particular within FEMA. Before Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, FEMA focused on preparing our own resources to respond to a disaster. We did not focus enough on preparing communities to make plans and preparations before a disaster strikes nor on the most appropriate role of tribal, State and local governments afterwards.

The 2005 Hurricane Season brought many lessons to FEMA and emergency management communities across the country. As President Bush said that September, "This government will learn the lessons of Hurricane Katrina. We are going to review every action and make necessary changes so that we are better prepared for any challenge of nature, or act of evil men, that could threaten our people." Many of those changes were included in Title VI, officially titled the "Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006," (Post-Katrina Act) which articulates expectations for FEMA, establishes new leadership responsibilities, brings an expanded scope of missions, and allows FEMA to undertake a broad range of activities involving preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation both before and after terrorist events, natural and manmade disasters. The Post-Katrina Act contains provisions that set out new law, amend the Homeland Security Act (HSA) and the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act).

I am pleased to appear before the Subcommittee today to describe the new FEMA, discuss how the new components being added will enhance our ability to prepare for all-hazard events, including catastrophic disasters, and to outline some specific catastrophic disaster planning activities we are undertaking.

The New FEMA Mission

As of March 31, 2007, FEMA's responsibility to lead and support efforts to reduce the loss of life and property and prepare the nation to address all hazards through a risk-based approach that will focus on the expanded comprehensive emergency management components of preparedness, response, recovery, and hazard mitigation. FEMA now has a broader mission, a wider constituency and a greater depth of penetration with the National Preparedness Goal and grants' programs. We are committed to move toward achieving a higher level of shared preparedness, greater capacity to respond, and a greater consensus on the system needed to assess our progress. The statute also addresses a fifth component — protection; FEMA will work closely with the Department's Office of Infrastructure Protection and other Federal partners to define FEMA's protection responsibilities. We will then map our efforts to fulfill these responsibilities through training, grants, planning, and other means.

Among the specific activities given to FEMA in the Post-Katrina Act are the following:

- leading the nation's comprehensive emergency management efforts (including protection) for all hazards, **including catastrophic incidents**;
- partnering with non-federal entities to build a national emergency management system;
- developing federal response capabilities;
- integrating FEMA's comprehensive emergency management responsibilities;
- building robust regional offices to address regional priorities;
- greater leveraging of DHS' resources
- working with states and local agencies to build non-federal emergency management capabilities, including those involving communications; and
- developing and coordinating the implementation of a risk-based all hazards preparedness strategy that addresses the unique needs of certain incidents.

The New FEMA and National Preparedness

The nation needs a dedicated and sustained national effort to organize, guide investment, and strengthen national preparedness. Much has been accomplished, yet we know from experience there are still systemic limitations in our preparedness. We must reexamine our familiar patterns of behavior and perceptions of risk to transform the culture of preparedness. The charge to build and sustain the culture of preparedness is a major objective of the new FEMA.

The Post- Katrina Act clearly invited a thorough assessment of FEMA's internal structure and presented the opportunity to incorporate lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina and to systematically integrate new and existing assets and responsibilities. That is precisely what we have done. The new FEMA is standing up a new National Preparedness Directorate, headed by a Deputy Administrator and supported by two Assistant Administrators. The National Preparedness Directorate will lead the effort to develop a culture of preparedness. It will be charged with consolidating FEMA's strategic

preparedness assets to include both existing FEMA programs and certain legacy Preparedness Directorate programs. It will incorporate functions related to preparedness doctrine, policy and contingency planning and will include the Department's exercise coordination and evaluation program, training activities, and prototypical Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness and Radiological Emergency Preparedness Programs. It will also be responsible for coordinating HSPD-8 (National Preparedness) implementation, including the National Preparedness Goal and target capabilities, the National Assessment and Reporting System, the Nationwide Plan Review, the Federal Preparedness Coordinator program, and coordinating with the approximately 2,100 Citizen Corps Councils in all of the States and territories and the numerous governmental and non-governmental Citizen Corps partners.

Building truly interchangeable homeland security capabilities takes more than merely embracing a loosely defined concept like "all hazards." We turned this concept into a systematic planning methodology using a capabilities-based framework. This meets the requirements of HSPD-8, which tasked the Secretary of Homeland Security, in coordination with the heads of other appropriate Federal departments and agencies and in consultation with State, local, territorial, and tribal governments, to develop a National Preparedness Goal. The Goal represents a shared national endeavor, not simply a Federal activity.

The set of target capabilities we developed, in cooperation with our Federal partners, to implement the Goal are designed to support the achievement of a fully integrated, adaptable, all hazards national emergency response system and active, layered national defenses against threats and acts of terrorism. They provide the means to build, sustain, and improve preparedness across all regions of the nation. The aim is to ensure that a robust prevention, mitigation, protection, response and recovery infrastructure is in place to deal rapidly, effectively and flexibly with terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies

Within FEMA, the National Integration Center (NIC) will provide FEMA with the ability to elevate preparedness and emergency management knowledge and capabilities across all levels of government: Federal, State and local. The NIC will serve both as a center for training and curriculum development and for the delivery of high quality training to first responders from the Emergency Management Institute, and The Center for Domestic Preparedness and its Noble Training Center across the full spectrum of preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation, as well as prevention in coordination with other organizations within DHS. The NIC will coordinate closely with FEMA's United States Fire Administration's National Fire Academy. The NIC is responsible for actively managing and maintaining the National Incident Management System (NIMS), and the National Response Plan (NRP), as well as the annexes and supplements to the NRP, such as the Catastrophic Incident Annex and the Catastrophic Incident Supplement. Working with Citizen Corps, the NIC will coordinate with the Corporation for National and Community Service to establish a process to better use volunteers and donations and to improve first responder activities with State, local and tribal governments, as well as non-governmental organizations.

With all of these new capabilities added to FEMA, we will be in a much stronger position to deliver enhanced capabilities to our State and local emergency management partners and other preparedness organizations and to engage the capabilities of the private sector. Beyond strengthening our all-hazards capabilities, the new preparedness strengths we are gaining will allow us to focus greater attention on catastrophic disaster planning. The new FEMA organization will reflect the expanded scope of FEMA's responsibilities and support a more nimble, flexible use of resources. It will strengthen FEMA's internal coordination and coordination with other DHS components, as well as coordination with other Departments and Agencies.

The President and Congress have consistently identified the need for specific and measurable goals for preparedness, national cooperation, application of assistance where the risk and need is greatest, determination of essential capabilities communities need, and advanced planning processes. HSPD-8, the lessons of Hurricane Katrina and the strategic requirements of the war on terrorism all require transformation of our nation's preparedness. We must change our practices and doctrine to reflect 21st century challenges, to exploit our Nation's strengths, and protect against our vulnerabilities by building and sustaining national preparedness.

FEMA Regional Offices

The Act codifies and expands FEMA's regional office structure, which will also strengthen our all-hazards and outreach capabilities. The ten Regional Administrators provided for in the Act report directly to the Administrator, and will be supported and coordinated by an Associate Deputy Administrator at FEMA headquarters. At the regional level, the Act provides for the creation of Regional Advisory Councils and a new generation of regional incident management/strike teams. The Regional Advisory Councils will provide advice and recommendations to the Regional Administrators on regional emergency management issues and identify weaknesses or deficiencies in preparedness, protection, response, recovery and mitigation for State, local and tribal governments based on their specialized knowledge of the region. The statute also establishes area offices for the Pacific and Caribbean jurisdictions, as well as for Alaska, in the appropriate regional offices. The Act also transfers the DHS Office of National Capital Region Coordination (NCRC) to FEMA. NCRC will continue its work with stakeholders to address the unique challenge resolving inter-agency and multi-jurisdictional issues of the National Capital Region. This new structure will facilitate our catastrophic planning activities.

Catastrophic Disaster Planning Initiative

We all recognize the urgent need to complete comprehensive catastrophic disaster planning for the most vulnerable areas of the United States. By definition a catastrophic disaster quickly overwhelms the existing disaster response capabilities of local, State, and Federal governments. Current Federal disaster response capabilities are not sufficiently robust to successfully address all the anticipated effects of catastrophic disasters.

Therefore, FEMA has initiated a catastrophic disaster planning initiative to improve response capabilities and complement the NRP, NIMS, and State and local planning activities. This initiative will ensure that DHS/FEMA and its Federal, State, and local partners have taken every possible measure to effect appropriate, quick, effective, and efficient response and recovery to protect the health, safety, and well-being of the population and, to the extent possible, restore the infrastructure following such an event.

We know that a well-constructed State catastrophic plan provides the critical foundation for development of an effective, integrated Federal-State response. Localized catastrophic planning provides essential knowledge for the development of the most effective preparedness and response efforts. In cooperation with affected state and local governments FEMA will identify the highest risk areas and examine loss estimates, current response capabilities, anticipated response shortfalls, and comprehensive planning strategies for addressing the shortfalls, to include new legislative and executive action if necessary. Information technology and modeling will be leveraged to develop interactive tools, services, and products to assist Federal, State, and local officials in catastrophic planning and operational response. Products will include incident-specific response plans for pre-selected geographic regions, based upon loss estimating models and capability inventories of affected local, State and Federal responders, as well as planning templates for planning for catastrophic incidents in other areas. Information technology will be maximized as part of this effort to ensure that appropriate interactive planning as well as operational tools are developed. This initiative will fulfill the Department's legislative and executive responsibilities to the Administration and the American public.

Specific Catastrophic Disaster Planning Activities

FEMA Catastrophic Disaster Response Planning Initiatives are currently focused on four specific areas, Southeast Louisiana, New Madrid Seismic Zone (NMSZ), the State of Florida and the State of California.

Southeast Louisiana Catastrophic Hurricane Planning Initiative

Thirteen southeastern Louisiana parishes (including the City of New Orleans) were selected as the initial geographic focus area for FEMA's "Catastrophic Planning" initiative because of their vulnerability to hurricane disasters. Substantial planning activity has been accomplished with the State of Louisiana and its parishes since Hurricane Katrina in planning and preparing for the 2006 and 2007 Hurricane Seasons.

New Madrid Seismic Zone Readiness Planning

In 2006, FEMA launched a major Catastrophic Disaster Response Planning initiative to focus on a no-notice major earthquake in the NMSZ, a 150-mile long fault involving four FEMA Regions (IV, V, VI, and VII); and eight States--Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, Arkansas and Missouri. Forty-four million people live in the eight-state region, 12 million in the high risk area. The consequences of an earthquake on the New Madrid fault would have a wide-ranging impact on the security; critical infrastructure and economy of the United States (see attachment). The impact to our National Infrastructure will compound the response problem – getting supplies and relief to survivors will be exceptionally challenging. Fiber, power and gas pipeline networks which support our nation would be affected in addition to transportation and other key critical infrastructure components. The disaster response could be complicated by large potential aftershocks in the area. NMSZ has a history of multiple large scale earthquakes as experienced during 1811-1812. We anticipate a significant requirement for security, and extreme weather conditions could affect population movements and temporary sheltering requirements depending on the impacts of winter, spring, summer and fall weather conditions.

The NMSZ initiative will address one of the 15 National Planning Scenarios. The Central United States Earthquake Consortium (CUSEC), the Mid-America Earthquake Center (MAEC), the United States Geological Survey (USGS) and FEMA have completed preliminary modeling of potential impacts of an earthquake in the NMSZ. The estimated total building loss alone in the area from one quake today could exceed \$70 Billion.

FEMA's planned approach to Catastrophic Disaster Response Planning is based on collaborative planning between Federal, State, and local governments, tribal nations, the private sector, voluntary organizations, and members of the critical infrastructure. The mission of the NMSZ Catastrophic Planning Project is to increase national readiness for this catastrophic event. Specifically, this will be accomplished by developing a series of annexes or supplements to existing base plans for response and recovery to a series of major earthquakes in the NMSZ and integrating them into a single document with Federal, regional, Tribal Nation, State, local, private sector, voluntary organizations and critical infrastructure components. Additionally, the mission is to identify issues that can not be resolved based on current capabilities and to propose recommended courses of action for decision makers involved in this project.

NMSZ planning will serve to accomplish the following three main objectives:

1. Improve response to a no-notice catastrophic earthquake and related hazards in the NMSZ.
2. Plan for a coordinated response, recovery and mitigation effort among Federal, State, tribal, private sector, voluntary organizations, critical infrastructure and local agencies.

3. Incorporate lessons from the Hurricane Katrina lessons learned and from previous earthquakes.

We will accomplish this by utilizing a unique Scenario-Driven Catastrophic Response Plan Development Process in the NMSZ. This process places operators in the same room with planners to develop plans based on real-world modeling. In other words, the people who respond to a disaster are integrally involved in writing the plan they will eventually use. Representatives from the entire spectrum of emergency management, first responders from the local level, State emergency management officials, and the Federal responders that staff the Joint Field Offices and other field offices together with the private sector and critical infrastructure, will collaborate to develop the plan in a manner similar to the way they work together in responding to an incident.

The scenario-driven planning concept combines the planning and exercise phases of plan development through a workshop format. Breakout rooms and action rooms are used to develop topic-specific plans based upon modeling and site specific scenarios in the involved communities. The accelerated process results in functional plans ready for immediate use. Examples of the diverse functional planning areas addressed are:

- Search and rescue
- Communications
- Command and Control
- Temporary medical care
- Special needs
- Debris
- Schools
- Evacuation
- Sheltering
- Mass care
- Pets
- Temporary housing
- Transportation, staging and distribution of critical resources
- Access control and reentry
- Power, water, and ice distribution
- Volunteer and donations management
- Hazardous Materials
- External Affairs

The scenario-driven catastrophic planning process promotes communication and builds stronger relationships between Federal, State, local, tribal, private sector, critical infrastructure and volunteer agencies that ultimately enhances the interoperability of plans. Participants at all levels of government and externally take ownership of the plans, and the operational knowledge and experience captured make those plans more viable. Working with the Central United States Earthquake Consortium (CUSEC), the eight States, Federal partners (DHS, USCG, EPA, USACE, DOD and others) the goal is to

identify important functional response areas and develop planning tools and templates to address them. Support is being provided on several fronts:

- Contract planners to assist the four FEMA Regions;
- Contract planners to assist each of the eight States;
- Logistical support to identify mobilization centers, staging areas and other requirements;
- A Cooperative Agreement to assist CUSEC in coordinating the initiative and provide staffing support. CUSEC represents the States involved and provides leadership for development of coordinated State and local planning in the NMSZ with our Federal partners.
- Support to integrate planning with the Tribal Nations;
- Support to the USACE to update the HAZUS database in support of Earthquake modeling required for development of catastrophic disaster plans and provide funding to the Mid-American Earthquake Center at the University of Illinois and the George Washington University Center for Crisis Disaster and Risk Management; and
- Support for exercise development, creation of a modeling library, and IT system development.

The stakeholders in the NMSZ Initiative will lead the development of the concept of operations for each planning area within the scenario-driven workshops, creating multi-jurisdictional plans in a collaborative environment. The process includes developing scenarios and researching previous plans, studies, and reports. A design team has established a format for response plans that will be developed in workshops, using templates designed from previous initiatives. Workshops will be conducted for individual States and two urban areas: Memphis, Tennessee, and St. Louis, Missouri. A rural area workshop will be conducted in Cairo, Illinois, focusing on the communities of Cairo, Illinois, Charleston, Missouri, and Wickliff, Kentucky.

This multiple-city concept allows for greater input from the State and local governments throughout the planning process. Following the city workshops, a final integration workshop will be held with key representatives from previous sessions and plans will be developed and distributed after stakeholder approval.

This project will ultimately produce a number of highly beneficial products including the following:

- A comprehensive no-notice catastrophic earthquake planning scenario for the Central United States to address a NMSZ 7.7 Richter scale earthquake for:
 - Two urban areas – St. Louis, Missouri and Memphis, Tennessee;
 - The rural areas of – Cairo, Illinois; Wickliff, Kentucky; and Charleston, Missouri;
- Standardized catastrophic 7.7 Richter scale earthquake disaster planning template for planning in other large urban and rural areas that addresses specific emergency response functional areas;
- State NMSZ Catastrophic Earthquake Response Annexes (as well as local and state-regional annexes, where applicable);

- Federal regional NMSZ Catastrophic Earthquake Response Annexes;
- An overall national plan for a New Madrid earthquake scenario that integrates all of the aforementioned plans into a single response system;
- A plan maintenance schedule and materials for training and exercises for the individual plan annexes and the overall national plan;
- Federal/State/Local/Tribal/Private Sector partnership to address the full spectrum of planning, including the critical infrastructure;
- Host city plans for potential host States;
- A foundation for continued refinement of plans in the future; and
- A template for utilization in catastrophic disaster response planning nationally.

These vertically and horizontally integrated Catastrophic Response and Recovery Plans will be compliant with NIMS and the NRP. The national plan will serve as a “bridging document” for Federal, State, local, Tribal Nation, private sector, voluntary organizations, and critical infrastructure plans. Networks and relationships will be fostered to enhance the region’s ability to coordinate response to a catastrophic disaster.

The following is our NMSZ schedule:

- FY 2007
 - Prepare Interim Concept of Operations (CONOP)
 - Conduct scenario-driven State workshops
- FY 2008
 - Continue scenario-driven State workshops
 - Conduct Regional scenario-driven workshops
 - Finalize NMSZ Plan
- FY 2009-2010
 - Scenario-based training & exercising
 - States independently/regionally exercise plans
- FY 2011
 - Major Command Post Exercise (Proposed)

If this event happened today the FEMA Administrator would immediately implement the NRP Catastrophic Incident Supplement to move life saving commodities and needed supplies to affected areas. We would work closely with the affected States and our partners to conduct an immediate damage assessment to identify specific areas affected using scientific tools and models from the Mid-America Earthquake Center and the National Infrastructure Simulation and Analysis Center. Working jointly with and using preliminary data from the State, we would make a rough approximation of the status of the critical infrastructure, key assets, and number of people and structures affected, and establish joint priorities for response.

Throughout the entire incident we would stay in constant communication with the Governors offering all available assistance and assets from the Federal government. The Emergency Alert System would also be used to provide public information to those in the area. All DHS/FEMA disaster response elements would be immediately mobilized to support response (i.e., Federal Incident Response Support Team (FIRST), National

Emergency Response Team (ERT-N), Emergency Response Team – Advance Element (ERT-A), Urban Search and Rescue, Mobile Emergency Response System (MERS), etc.,) and to establish a Unified Command Structure, we would determine the requirement for a lead FEMA Region, and establish Primary and/or multiple JFOs, as needed, for coordination. JFO Coordination Groups would be immediately deployed to each affected State's Emergency Operations Centers. Upon analysis of the magnitude of the requirements, a determination would be made on implementing the Defense Production Act to prioritize manufacturing in the private sector to meet critical response commodities and supplies needs.

In such an event, we would fully activate our National Response Coordination Center and Regional Response Coordination Centers in order to have ESFs ready to support our response and recovery efforts based upon identified requirements from the field, and address key problems involving transportation, housing, emergency power, etc. The 32 Departments and Agencies signatory to the NRP would play a major role in supporting the response to a NMSZ earthquake through the 15 ESFs. The ESFs serve as the primary operational-level mechanism to provide assistance to State, local, and tribal governments in functional areas such as transportation, communications, public works and engineering, firefighting, mass care, housing, human services, public health and medical services, search and rescue, agriculture, energy, etc. A major challenge will be sheltering, housing, mass care and taking care of special needs populations. Ingress and egress into the area could be impeded. We have a range of new Recovery policies which we would implement in response to such an event.

Florida Catastrophic Planning Initiative

We are undertaking Catastrophic Disaster Response Planning in coordination with the State of Florida for a Category 5 Hurricane impacting southeastern Florida. This is a two phased project. Phase one places specific focus on evacuation planning in the adjacent counties around Lake Okeechobee. Phase two will address the requirements associated with responding to a Category 5 Hurricane impacting South Florida and Miami, a large urban area with a diverse population. FEMA is providing resident contract planners to support the State and local communities in this effort. As part of this effort, urban areas of southeast Florida and the Lake Okeechobee region have received additional planning resources and will be provided updated laser-mapping of the Herbert Hoover Dike area from DHS/FEMA to help local counties and the State of Florida develop regional evacuation and disaster response plans.

FEMA provided Florida with seven planners to develop disaster plans and procedures for two critical preparedness scenarios. The first scenario is an event involving a potential dike failure along Lake Okeechobee that will include an in-depth regional plan for notification, evacuation, response and recovery of communities located near the Herbert Hoover Dike. The second planning scenario involves a catastrophic event that strikes the greater Miami area, putting hundreds of thousands of residents out of their homes. It is estimated that over 45,000 residents currently live within the potential flood area of the Herbert Hoover Dike and Lake Okeechobee in Palm Beach, Glades, Hendry and Martin

counties. Nearly 7 million residents live in Palm Beach, Broward and Miami-Dade counties.

Technicians contracted by FEMA will begin laser-mapping areas of Lake Okeechobee, using hi-resolution Light Detection And Ranging (LiDAR) technology, to support regional evacuation planning efforts for the Herbert Hoover Dike. This data will provide hurricane forecasters and emergency officials with a more accurate assessment of how a tropical system, such as a hurricane, might impact the Lake and its surrounding area.

The detailed elevation mapping will aid planners by determining where potential flooding may occur, how rapidly water will flow, and in which areas the water may pool should a dike breach occur. The goal is to improve understanding of potential impacts and identify additional resources that maybe necessary for the regional catastrophic planning efforts and protective actions.

Scenario-driven workshops to address specific State and local functional areas for planning are also the foundation for the Catastrophic Disaster Response Planning conducted in the State of Florida. Since September 2006, this process has enabled ongoing collaborative efforts by local, county, state and federal agencies to develop initial disaster plans in the event of a tropical system or breach of the Herbert Hoover Dike that is maintained by the USACE. The plan addresses key issues such as alert and notification; transportation and evacuation routes; temporary sheltering; providing immediate life-saving, life-sustaining, and basic human needs services (food, emergency medical, emergency sheltering, search and rescue); and medium and longer-term human services such as housing assistance, personal counseling, and reentry support services.

Specific products from this initiative will include developing standardized and comprehensive catastrophic Category 5 hurricane disaster functional response plans for the State of Florida and responding Federal agencies for utilization as planning templates in other large urban areas that address site specific emergency response functional areas. Included will be the following:

- Lake Okeechobee Evacuation Plan
- Host city plans for potential host States.
- Federal/State/Local/Tribal/Private Sector/Voluntary Organizations partnership to address the full spectrum of planning, including the critical infrastructure.
- Foundation for continued refinement of plans in the future.

Thus, the same unique process we are utilizing in the NMSZ, scenario-driven workshops, is being applied to the State of Florida to enhance their capability to respond to a catastrophic category 5 hurricane making landfall in Southern Florida. The Florida schedule for this project is as follows:

Phase 1 – Lake Okeechobee Evacuation Plan Spring ‘07

- February Scenario-Driven Workshop – local level (completed)
- April Scenario-Driven Workshop – State level
- May 7-11, 2007 Exercise

- June 11-13, 2007 Scenario-Driven Workshop – to follow up on unresolved issues from the February 2007 and April 2007 Scenario-Driven Workshops and the May 2007 Lake Okeechobee Evacuation Plan Exercise

Phase 2 – Comprehensive Florida Plan

- Fall 2007 Workshops
- Spring 2008 Workshops
- Fall 2008 consolidation of local, State and Federal partner workshop inputs
- Training and exercise of the Comprehensive Florida Plan in 2009

California Catastrophic Disaster Readiness Planning

The California Catastrophic Planning Initiative is in the initial planning phase. It is important to note that the results of the Louisiana, New Madrid Seismic Zone, and Florida Catastrophic Planning Initiatives and the associated grass roots workshops, operational planning, exchange of information, training, and exercises will be used to facilitate California planning. The California initiative will involve conducting scoping activities for catastrophic seismic incident readiness planning with the State of California. Technical assistance will be provided to facilitate development of a planning process with stakeholders that will address several potential functional areas: evacuation including medical/special needs, transportation/staging and distribution of critical resources, command and control, saving lives, search and rescue, temporary medical care, sheltering, hosting, access control and reentry, power, water and ice distribution, volunteer and donations management, hazardous materials, external affairs, business, industry and government partnerships, private sector coordination, the critical infrastructure, and exercises of the plan, to include application of the Catastrophic Incident Supplement to the NRP. It will also address the interim and temporary housing problem after a major or catastrophic disaster including development of strategies; plans, and procedures; and building coalitions.

FEMA Recovery Catastrophic Disaster Planning Initiative

For FY 2007, FEMA's Recovery planning and capability building initiatives include enhancing mass care capability by improving the National Shelter System and developing better tools for coordinating and tracking donations and volunteers, developing a national disaster housing strategy and improving operational planning for providing temporary housing in a catastrophic disaster, establishing a case management program, updating ESF 6 Mass Care, Housing, and Human Services standard operating procedures, developing debris estimation technology and monitoring methodology and enhancing state and local debris operations capabilities, and improving our capability to conduct operations planning for long term disaster operations.

Emergency Evacuation, Shelter, and Housing

FEMA's most pressing priority for planning for Recovery from a catastrophic disaster event has been *emergency evacuation, shelter and housing*. In 2004, FEMA completed

an initial Catastrophic Disaster Housing Strategy, which proposed several initiatives to increase FEMA's capability to provide assistance to individuals and households following an extraordinary or catastrophic disaster. The strategy provided the principles and recommended strategies that establish the framework for the catastrophic disaster housing recovery planning being done today. Key needs identified at that time included: an expandable disaster registration intake and applicant assistance process; the ability to provide immediate benefits payments; a plan for assisting applicants to temporarily relocate to outside the disaster area; and a strategy and prepared public messages to provide victims with information about assistance.

- **Mass Evacuee Support Planning:** The 2005 Gulf Coast hurricanes caused several hundred thousand residents to evacuate to over forty States, many for prolonged time periods. Cities such as Houston, Oklahoma City, Atlanta, and Baton Rouge received hundreds of thousands of evacuees requiring immediate shelter, food, other basic assistance, as well as longer term services. In June 2006, FEMA published Recovery Strategy RS-001, Mass Sheltering and Housing Assistance. This strategy addresses many contingencies for providing sheltering and housing assistance for declared emergencies and major disasters. In addition, FEMA is undertaking more detailed mass evacuee support planning. This will assist State and local governments to plan and prepare for hosting large displaced populations. The project includes FEMA developing an evacuee registration and tracking capability, implementation plans for federal evacuation support to states, emergency sheltering guidance and providing direct planning assistance to potential host States and communities.
- **The National Emergency Family Registry and Locator System and National Emergency Child Locator Center:** As defined in the Post Katrina Act, these capabilities will address the reunification of displaced persons and activity to locate missing children during disasters. On disasters declared by the President, this tracking capability will assist FEMA, Department of Justice and the Red Cross in further developing and implementing methods for quickly identifying and reunifying missing and separated children and family members during a disaster.
- **Improving Shelter Management and Accountability:** FEMA and the American Red Cross, the nation's largest operator of major congregate shelters during disasters. The first phase of the National Shelter System (NSS) was developed through a FEMA/American Red Cross partnership to provide a web-based data system to support shelter management, reporting, and facility identification activities. The system is intended for use by all agencies that provide shelter services during disasters to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the shelter populations and available shelter capacity. In addition, this system will provide visibility on large shelter populations and position FEMA to provide targeted registration assistance to disaster victims. Outreach and training for Federal, State, and local authorities in use of the system is being conducted.

- **Housing Options:** The FEMA Housing Portal was developed to consolidate available rental resources for evacuees from Federal agencies, private organizations, and individuals. The Joint Housing Solutions Group is a dedicated unit to research and document alternatives to traditional temporary housing. They are currently conducting initial baseline field tests of a housing option assessment tool.
- **Expanding Home Inspections Capacity:** FEMA has tripled the daily home inspection capacity of FEMA contracted firms from 7,000 per day to 20,000 per day through a new contractual agreement. This added capacity – combined with a newly established third party evaluation of inspections performed on victims' damaged homes – will increase the speed and accuracy of home inspections that determine the FEMA repair and replacement grants for which a victim may be eligible.

Applicant Registration and Management

In 2006 and 2007 FEMA has focused its Recovery planning and capability building efforts on improving applicant management systems, expanding registration intake and processing capacity, increasing fraud controls, supporting displaced populations, identifying alternative forms of temporary housing, and debris management planning. FEMA has made significant progress in increasing its capability to provide assistance to individuals particularly in the areas of registration, applicant processing, and providing assistance.

- **Doubling Registration Capacity to 200,000 Per Day:** During the days and weeks following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, FEMA surpassed 100,000 registrations a day, shattering all previous records of intake. While call center capacity was ramped to its highest levels ever, FEMA is pursuing even more robust contract and contingency surge capabilities that will quickly allow for rapid expansion to a registration intake capacity of up to 200,000 per day. FEMA's Internet-based registration capability has been increased by improving accessibility, allowing FEMA to handle more registrations than ever before. This will help reduce registration wait times and FEMA Helpline information delays following a major disaster.
- **Deployable Mobile Registration Intake Centers (MRICs) Pilot:** Recognizing many disaster victims may be stranded or in congregate shelters with no communications, and unable to register for assistance, FEMA has established a new registration pilot program that pushes registration capabilities directly into the field. In the 2007 hurricane season FEMA will have the ability to deploy Mobile Registrations Intake Centers immediately to congregate shelters and provide an on-site capability to quickly register for FEMA assistance.

Debris Management Planning

Management of contaminated debris is of particular concern for terrorist events, but is also an issue in most large natural disasters. An Interagency Work Group to coordinate Federal agency management of contaminated debris began work in 2005 just prior to Hurricane Katrina. The Work Group is further developing Federal contaminated debris operational procedure guidance. This project is analyzing the implications of a catastrophic incident on contaminated debris management programs and policies and will assist FEMA, USACE, EPA, USCG, and other federal stakeholders to better define their operational role and inter-relationships. FEMA's Public Assistance Program is also undertaking two catastrophic planning initiatives focusing on increasing State and local debris management capabilities through planning and enhancing Federal capabilities to estimate debris volumes following a disaster to assist in operational planning and cost estimation.

Increasing Fraud Controls

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, FEMA has also already taken steps to implement new and stronger controls pertaining to identity and occupancy verification of applicants for disaster assistance. Examples of controls implemented include: deployment of a new Internet registration application that disallows any duplicate registrations; added identity proofing to the call center registration application so that all Individual and Households Program (IHP) registrations are subjected to the same stringent criteria, including verification of social security numbers and occupancy requirements; data-marking any applications in FEMA's database that fail identity proofing so they are flagged for manual review and denied automated payment; real-time interaction between the FEMA Service Representative and the applicant during registration to ensure that the data entered that resulted in a failed identity check is correct before accepting the application; working with FEMA's data contractor to flag any addresses that are not residential addresses in order to prevent automated payments without an on-site inspection verification of address and residency; and flagging at-risk social security numbers to identify potential fraud.

FEMA Planning Partnership with State and Local Emergency Management Officials

FEMA is very excited about another extremely important initiative. This initiative involves collaboration between FEMA, the New York State Emergency Management Office, and the New York City Office of Emergency Management (OEM) based on work New York City OEM has already accomplished through its State and Local Integration Program, a program designed to provide accessible predictive modeling, asset management, a standardized request and management system, and operational planning for the receipt of assets. This initiative will enable the new FEMA to lean forward and respond more quickly and efficiently to major disasters. The initiative will be a joint effort between State Emergency Management representatives and FEMA Regional representatives to conduct a series of structured discussions with local jurisdictions to obtain a clearer picture of potential disaster response asset gaps in the critical areas of

debris removal, evacuation, sheltering, interim housing, healthcare facilities, commodity distribution, communications, fuel, . The discussions will provide an opportunity for local jurisdictions to ask specific questions of Federal and State officials and identify issues of critical concern to help long-term preparedness programs. We are confident that through these structured discussions, we will all be better prepared.

National Response Plan/Catastrophic Incident Supplement

The National Response Plan (NRP) and the National Incident Management System (NIMS) are currently undergoing an extensive review and revision by Federal, State, and local government officials, tribal authorities, non-governmental and private sector officials. The review includes all major components of the NRP including the base plan, Emergency Support Functions, and Annexes. The role of the Principal Federal Official, Federal Coordinating Officer, and Joint Field Office Structure also are being reviewed during this process. A Catastrophic Planning Work Group is examining the Catastrophic Incident Annex and Supplement (CIS). The CIS is a self-supporting operations plan that includes a synchronization matrix. It is designed so that each department and agency can, under both their statutory and NRP assignments and responsibilities, execute specific mission operations with little or no warning in response to a catastrophic Incident of National Significance. The current NIMS/NRP revision process includes a Catastrophic Planning Work Group. The group is conducting an interagency review and revision of both the Catastrophic Incident Annex and CIS. The revised Annex and CIS will reflect enhancements made to the NRP and its supporting ESF, functional, and incident annexes.

Hurricane Katrina revealed a number of NRP weaknesses (accounting for the intensive review now underway). This review will identify all agency and functional weaknesses and address them in the rewrite of the plan. The revised NRP and NIMS are scheduled to be released the summer of 2007. All agencies will be invited to participate in exercises through the use of training aids (to be developed), and as additional issues are identified they will be addressed. Some agencies are farther along in planning than others. This will take some time to develop.

In short, the new FEMA will be more agile, significantly stronger, and leaning more forward to deliver assistance more effectively than before. We have heard you and are acting on what you have asked us to do. FEMA will be ready to take a leadership role where needed, provide support where appropriate and be on-hand across the country before and after any major event – that I commit to you.

Thank you for your time today and I look forward to answering your questions.